DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 452 293 UD 034 114

AUTHOR	Polit, Denise F.; London, Andrew S.; Martinez, John M.
TITLE	Food Security and Hunger in Poor, Mother-Headed Families in Four U.S. Cities. The Project on Devolution and Urban Change Working Paper.
INSTITUTION	Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., New York, NY.
SPONS AGENCY	George Gund Foundation, Cleveland, OH.; Cleveland Foundation, OH.; California Wellness Foundation.; Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, New York, NY.; Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.; Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.; James G. Irvine Foundation, San Francisco, CA.; Alcoa Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA.; Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, MI.; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Princeton, NJ.; Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, MI.; Joyce Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia, PA.
PUB DATE	2000-05-00
NOTE	50p.; Also supported by the Ambrose Monell Foundation.
AVAILABLE FROM	Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 16 East 34 Street, New York, NY 10016. Tel: 212-532-3200; Web site: http://www.mdrc.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Child Health; Employment; Family Income; *Hunger; Mothers; One Parent Family; Poverty; Urban Areas; *Welfare Recipients; *Welfare Services
IDENTIFIERS	*Food Security

ABSTRACT

Drawing on 1998-99 survey and ethnographic data from research on the implementation and effects of welfare reform in four large cities, this paper describes the food security of mother-headed families in highly disadvantaged urban neighborhoods who had received or currently receive cash welfare benefits. The families of four groups of women were compared: those who worked and no longer received welfare; those who combined welfare and work; nonworking welfare recipients; and those who neither worked nor received welfare. Food insecurity in the prior year was high in all groups. About half the families were food insecure. There was hunger in over 15 percent of families. Nearly one-third of the families had food hardships affecting children's diets. Food insecurity was highest among families where mothers had neither employment income nor welfare benefits and lowest among families where mothers worked and no longer received welfare, though even in this group, 44.5 percent were food insecure, and 15 percent had experienced hunger. Interview data indicate that, in this population, women who are food secure expend considerable energy piecing together strategies to ensure an adequate amount of food available for themselves and their children. (Contains 58 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

UD

ED 452 293

The Project on Devolution and

Urban Change

Food Security and Hunger in Poor, Mother-Headed Families in Four U.S. Cities

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
J.S. Greissman
Manpower Demonstration Res. Corp.
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

UD034114

The Project on Devolution
and Urban Change

Working Paper

Food Security and Hunger in Poor, Mother-Headed Families in Four U.S. Cities

Denise F. Polit
Andrew S. London
John M. Martinez

MDRC

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation

May 2000

Funders of the Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
W. K. Kellogg Foundation
Ford Foundation
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The George Gund Foundation
The Joyce Foundation
The Cleveland Foundation
The James Irvine Foundation
The California Wellness Foundation
The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dissemination of MDRC's work is also supported by MDRC's Public Policy Outreach Funders: the Ford Foundation, the Ambrose Monell Foundation, the Alcoa Foundation, and the James Irvine Foundation.

The findings and conclusions in this paper do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the funders.

For information about MDRC, see our website: www.mdrc.org.
MDRC® is a registered trademark of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Copyright © 2000 by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. All rights reserved.

Contents

	Tables and Figure	iv
	Acknowledgments	v
	Abstract	1
I.	**Introduction**	2
	A. The Urban Change Study	2
	B. The Welfare Policy Context	3
	C. Food Insufficiency and Insecurity	4
II.	**Description of the Research Samples**	7
	A. The Survey Sample	7
	B. The Ethnographic Sample	10
III.	**Findings on Food Insecurity and Hunger**	10
	A. Survey Findings	10
	B. Ethnographic Findings	20
IV.	**Discussion**	25
	Appendix A	31
	References	34
	Recent Publications on MDRC Projects	38

Tables and Figure

Table

1	Selected Characteristics of the Urban Change 1998-1999 Survey Sample, by Work and Welfare Status	8
2	Household Food Security Scale, Item Frequencies	11
3	Food Sufficiency, Food Security, and Child Hunger, By Work and Welfare Status	14
4	Food Security, by Employment History	16
5	Food Security, by Welfare History	17
6	Food Security, by Receipt of Food Assistance in Prior Month	19
7	Food Security and Child Hunger, by Site	21
A.1	Estimated Regression Coefficients for the Probability of Being Food Secure	32
A.2	Food Security and Child Hunger, by Work and Welfare Status, Unadjusted Percentages	33

Figure

1	Food Security, by Work and Welfare Status and Current Population Survey	13

Acknowledgments

The completion of this Working Paper was made possible by the efforts and contributions of many people and organizations.

First and foremost, we thank the funders of the Urban Change project; they are listed at the front of the paper. Without their generous support, this work would not have been possible. Also essential was the cooperation of the individuals who are part of the study and who provided the information presented in this paper.

Valuable comments on an earlier draft were offered by Margaret Andrews, Craig Gundersen, Mark Nord, Laura Tiehen, and Josh Winicki, of the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Gary Bickel, of the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Karil Bialostosky, of the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We thank the ethnography teams in Cleveland and Philadelphia, especially Kathy Edin and Ellen Scott, for their efforts.

At MDRC, Gordon Berlin and Barbara Goldman, co-directors of the Urban Change project, provided guidance, insight, and helpful comments on drafts of this paper. We are also grateful for the feedback provided by other members of the Urban Change team. Vanessa Hosein analyzed much of the data and, along with Herbert Collado, provided excellent research assistant support for this paper. Rebecca Widom assisted with data analysis. Robert Weber edited the paper, and Stephanie Cowell word-processed the final document.

The Authors

Abstract

Despite the strength of the American economy in the past few years, food insecurity and hunger continue to affect millions of American families. Drawing on 1998-1999 survey and ethnographic data from the Urban Change study (a multicomponent study of the implementation and effects of welfare reform in four large cities), this paper describes the food security of mother-headed families who were living in highly disadvantaged urban neighborhoods and who had received or were currently receiving cash welfare benefits. The families of four groups of women were compared: those who, at the time of the interview, worked and were no longer receiving welfare; those who combined welfare and work; nonworking welfare recipients; and those who neither worked nor were then receiving welfare. The survey results indicated that food insecurity in the prior year was high in all groups. Overall, about half the families were food insecure, and hunger was found in slightly more than 15 percent of the families. Moreover, in nearly one-third of the families there were food hardships that affected the children's diets. Food insecurity was most prevalent among families where the mother had neither employment income nor welfare benefits. Food insecurity was lowest among the families where the mothers were working and no longer getting welfare, but even in this group 44.5 percent were food insecure, and nearly 15 percent had experienced hunger. Data from in-depth ethnographic interviews indicate that, in this population, women who are food secure nevertheless expend considerable energy piecing together strategies to ensure that there is an adequate amount of food available for themselves and their children.

I. Introduction

Food hardships in American households have posed an enduring challenge to health, nutrition, and social policy in the United States. Despite the growth of the U.S. economy in the past five years, there has been virtually no change in the prevalence of food insecurity in this country. In 1998, as in 1995, just over 10 percent of all U.S. households were food insecure (Bickel, Carlson, & Nord, 1999). During this same period, welfare policy was revolutionized with the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. One of the key features of this act is that it places a five-year lifetime limit on federally funded cash benefits for most recipient families. As increasing numbers of poor families move toward the termination of cash benefits, there is considerable interest in understanding the implications of changes in welfare policies and programs on the health and well-being of children and their parents. On the one hand, supporters of welfare reform expect that time limits in conjunction with enhanced but temporary assistance will promote self-sufficiency and improve the financial situation of these families in the long run. On the other hand, critics predict devastating effects on families — increased poverty, more homelessness and housing problems, loss of health insurance, and greater food insecurity and hunger. Accurate descriptions of the magnitude and nature of problems some Americans face in getting sufficient food are needed to inform the development or refinement of policies affecting struggling families. This paper describes the food security of single mothers who either had been welfare recipients or were still recipients and who therefore were at especially high risk of being affected by welfare reform policies. However, because data for this paper were collected before any time limits went into effect, the findings do not offer evidence of how welfare reform will ultimately affect food hardship.

A. The Urban Change Study

This paper is based on data from the Project on Devolution and Urban Change (Urban Change for short), which is being undertaken by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). The Urban Change project is a five-year multicomponent study of the implementation and effects of PRWORA on poor families with children and on the neighborhoods in which they live. The study is being conducted in four large urban counties: Cuyahoga, Ohio (Cleveland); Los Angeles, California; Miami-Dade, Florida; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The study's focus on areas of concentrated poverty in urban areas is based on the assumption that it is in these areas that the effects of welfare reform will be most profound.

The Urban Change project encompasses five complementary studies: a longitudinal ethnographic study of the lives of approximately 125 families; an implementation study that describes the experiences of welfare agencies as they put the new policies into effect; an individual-level impact study of the effects of welfare reform on recipients and their children, drawing on both administrative records and survey data; an institutional study that examines how welfare reform is affecting nonprofit institutions; and a neighborhood indicators study that assesses changes in statistical indicators of health, economics, and social well-being at the neighborhood level. This paper uses first-round survey and ethnographic data, collected shortly after PRWORA

was implemented, to provide a descriptive baseline against which changes in the population and possible effects of welfare reform can be assessed.[1]

The first Urban Change survey involved in-person interviews with a sample of women who, in May 1995, were single mothers aged 18-45 who were receiving welfare and/or food stamp benefits and who were living in neighborhoods characterized by high rates of poverty or welfare receipt.[2] Based on data from administrative records, the sample was randomly selected from recipients of food stamps and/or cash welfare benefits who lived in census tracts where either the poverty rate exceeded 30 percent or the rate of welfare receipt exceeded 20 percent. The sample consists of approximately 1,000 women per site, for a total of 3,960 respondents (78.6 percent of those recipients randomly sampled). The survey interviews, which were completed between March 1998 and March 1999, covered a wide range of topics, including the mothers' employment and income, household structure and living conditions, health and health care coverage for themselves and their children, and their families' material hardship and hunger. For the purposes of this paper, only women who had received cash welfare benefits at some point in their lives (95.2 percent of the overall sample) were included in the analyses.

The ethnographic study involves in-depth, in-person interviews over a three-year period (with ongoing interim contact) with a sample of approximately 40 welfare-reliant families in each Urban Change city. The sample was drawn from three high-poverty neighborhoods per site. The interviews cover many of the same issues as the survey, but they yield richer, narrative data about how the families are coping with the new welfare rules and policies. The first round of ethnographic interviewing was completed in late 1998.

B. The Welfare Policy Context

PRWORA, which was enacted in August 1996, ended "welfare as we know it": the previous cash welfare program (Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC) was replaced by a new form of aid called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), whose name expresses the intent that welfare be a temporary source of financial support. The act, which ended the entitlement to cash assistance, provides lump-sum block grants to states and gives them unprecedented responsibility for developing their welfare programs. However, PRWORA involves certain federal mandates, including a five-year lifetime limit on federally assisted cash benefits for most families (including adults and their dependent children). States are authorized to impose even shorter time limits if they choose to do so. The 1996 law also places more stringent work and participation requirements on welfare recipients than had previously existed, requiring most of them to go to work no later than two years after entering the program. To meet the requirements, states must engage substantial portions of their caseloads in welfare-to-work programs.

From the perspective of individual recipients, welfare reform portends many changes. Unless exempted from the requirements, they must be either working or engaged in a work-

---

[1]This paper will be incorporated into a large health report (forthcoming, 2000) that describes health-related material hardships, health status, health care utilization, and health insurance, using data from the survey and ethnographic components of Urban Change.

[2]A second survey will target 4,000 single mothers who received welfare and/or food stamp benefits at a later point in time. These families will constitute the post-welfare-reform cohort.

related activity to qualify for cash assistance. To participate in required activities, they must find and arrange for the care of their children; find a means of transportation; acquire a suitable wardrobe; and restructure their daily schedules (including doctors' appointments, visits with their children's teachers, appointments with other service providers, grocery shopping, and so on).[3]

Despite the fact that the five-year federal time limit has not yet been reached by those who were receiving benefits in 1996, when the legislation was enacted, the welfare rolls have dropped sharply over the past five years.[4] Across all states, welfare caseloads declined by 47 percent between January 1994 and March 1999 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Many factors undoubtedly have contributed to this decline, including the strong economy and the wider availability of jobs. And although time limits have not directly reduced the caseloads in most states, welfare reform's emphasis on work has undoubtedly led many to have earnings sufficiently large to make them ineligible for cash assistance. Additionally, it is suspected that part of the decline reflects a "signaling effect" whereby some women leave the welfare rolls before they are actually required to do so because of their awareness of the time limits and new work and participation requirements.

The welfare reform legislation made substantial changes to many other programs that assist poor families, including the Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program was scaled back through several PRWORA provisions, including overall reductions in the calculation of benefits. Also, states can now put certain food stamp rules (for example, rules about sanctions)[5] into conformance with rules in their cash assistance programs. Despite these changes, food stamp benefits have continued as one of the few federal entitlement programs and are considered a cornerstone of aid to the working poor. During the same 1994-1999 period, however, participation in the Food Stamp Program declined by 33 percent, with most of the decline occurring between September 1996 and September 1997 (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1999). This reduction in the use of food stamps is larger than can be accounted for by the improved economy or welfare reform (Zedlewski & Brauner, 1999; Figlio, Gunderson, & Ziliak, 2000), and it has led to considerable speculation — and concern — about the nutritional status of poor families leaving welfare.

C. Food Insufficiency and Insecurity

Until the mid-1990s, the most widely used measure of food hardship in large-scale surveys was an index of food insufficiency. Food insufficiency was defined as "an inadequate amount of food intake due to lack of resources" (Briefel & Wotecki, 1992). A person was classified as food insufficient if he or she reported that the family "sometimes" or "often" did not get

---

[3]Another MDRC working paper that draws on ethnographic data from the Urban Change study describes the kinds of work-family tradeoffs that women face as they enter employment (Edin, Scott, London, & Mazelis, 1999).

[4]In several states, however, there are interim-termination time limits that *have* already gone into effect. For example, in Florida, recipients who are not long-term recipients are allowed to receive cash benefits for only 24 months in any 60-month period; the first group hit the time limit in October 1998, although almost everyone at that time was given a 6-month extension. (Long-term recipients and custodial parents under age 24 who have no work experience and/or no high school diploma can receive welfare for 36 months in a 72-month period in Florida.)

[5]A sanction is a penalty involving loss of part or all of the cash assistance grant (and sometimes of other benefits as well) for a period of time because of noncompliance with welfare rules.

enough food to eat. This measure was administered in the late 1980s and early 1990s in national food surveys by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and as part of the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III).

Dissatisfaction with both the food insufficiency construct and the measure as an indicator of hunger and food hardship resulted in various multidisciplinary efforts to develop new indicators. One factor associated with these efforts was a conceptual shift from a more medical definition (food insufficiency resulting from an inadequate amount of food) to a more social scientific definition that encompasses anxiety about food problems and efforts to stretch or extend food resources (food insecurity).

Food insecurity is now widely considered a core indicator of food hardship. A landmark report by the Life Sciences Research Office (Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology) provided consensus definitions of food insecurity and hunger: "Food insecurity exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain. Hunger (in its meaning of the uneasy or painful sensation caused by lack of food) and malnutrition are potential, although not necessary, consequences of food insecurity" (Anderson, 1990, p. 1560). Food security, then, is a person's access at all times to nutritionally adequate food "without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies" (Anderson, 1990).

In the years following the release of this report, considerable collaborative effort by public and private institutions (including the formation in 1992 of a federal interagency working group called the Food Security Measurement Project) was put into the development and testing of a national benchmark measure of food security that could be used to estimate trends in food insecurity. The result was the 18-item self-report Household Food Security Scale that classifies respondents into one of four categories: food secure, food insecure without hunger, food insecure with moderate hunger, and food insecure with severe hunger (Carlson, Andrews, & Bickel, 1999). The scale, which has been found to be reliable and valid for both population and individual uses (Frongillo, 1999), was administered to survey respondents in the Urban Change study, together with the simpler measure of food insufficiency.

The Household Food Security Scale has been administered by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, through its Current Population Survey (CPS), each year since 1995. During the 1995-1998 period, the prevalence of food insecurity remained remarkably stable. In 1998, some 10.5 million households in the United States, representing 10.2 percent of all households, were food insecure. Over 14 million children lived in such households. Moreover, in 3.7 million households the level of insecurity was sufficiently great that hunger occurred (Bickel et al., 1999). Thus, even with a strong economy and the existence of a nutritional safety net, many American families are struggling to meet basic needs.

While not all poor people are food insecure, and while some people above poverty experience hunger, there is a clear and consistent relationship between food insecurity/hunger and income (Carlson et al., 1999; Rose, 1999; Rose, Gunderson, & Oliveira, 1998; Alaimo, Briefel, Frongillo, & Olson, 1998; Nelson, Brown, & Lurie, 1998; Urban Institute, 1999). In the 1998 CPS, for example, 35.4 percent of households with income below the poverty level, compared

with 6.7 percent of households above poverty, were food insecure (Bickel et al., 1999).

Food insecurity is also strongly associated with many other characteristics that are correlated with welfare receipt. People who are food insecure disproportionately are Hispanic or African-American; live in single-parent households; are unemployed; have less than a high school diploma; and live in urban areas (Alaimo et al., 1998; Bickel et al., 1999; Kendall, Olson, & Frongillo, 1995; Cutts, Pheley, & Geppert, 1998). These are also the characteristics of people who tend to be long-term welfare recipients and to have a variety of barriers to employment (see, for example, Danziger et al., 1999; Kalil et al., 1998; Zedlewski, 1999).

The literature suggests that people who are especially vulnerable to food insecurity are those undergoing an economic transition, such as food stamp loss or reduction and job loss (Nelson et al., 1998; Rose, 1999; Zedlewski & Brauner, 1999; Gunderson & Gruber, forthcoming). Thus, as families lose cash assistance and food stamp benefits (either because they no longer qualify or because they are unaware that food stamp and welfare eligibility are distinct), one possible consequence of welfare reform is that there will be effects on food security.

Indeed, there are preliminary indications, mostly from small or nonrandom samples, that families leaving welfare may be experiencing food deprivation and other hardships. For example, in a South Carolina study, 17 percent of former recipients reported having had no way to buy food some of the time since leaving welfare — a significant increase from the 9 percent who experienced this problem while still on welfare. Former recipients who were working were as likely as those not working to have trouble paying for food (South Carolina Department of Social Services, 1998a, 1998b). According to data from over 25,000 clients of emergency food programs in 1997, large numbers of former recipients (1 out of 8 of those surveyed) were turning to soup kitchens and food pantries (Second Harvest, 1997). Findings from surveys in over 30 major cities also suggest that requests for emergency food assistance by families with children has risen sharply, and a number of cities — including Los Angeles and Philadelphia — attribute most of the increase to welfare reform (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 1997, 1998). Most directors of food banks in Detroit indicated in a recent survey that their caseloads had increased in the two years since welfare reform implementation, and two-thirds cited welfare reform as the primary cause of their growing burden (Eisinger, 1999). Users of emergency food services in Detroit were also surveyed, and the research suggested that the about 20 percent of those who recently came into the system had done so because of food stamp reductions associated with welfare reform. While these studies do not offer conclusive evidence that welfare reform has had or will have an effect on food security, they underscore the need to gather further information about the food adequacy of families who leave welfare.

This paper examines food insufficiency, food insecurity, and hunger in a large sample of poor women living in disadvantaged neighborhoods in four cities. All the women either were on welfare at the time of the interview or had previously received cash benefits, and therefore all were potentially at risk of being subject to the new welfare and food stamp policies. The analyses were designed to describe the nutritional status of four groups of women with different income sources at the time of the interviews:

- Women who worked for pay and were no longer receiving cash welfare benefits;

- Women who combined work with welfare;
- Women who received cash benefits without working; and
- Women who neither worked nor received cash assistance.

These analyses are expected to provide preliminary insights into what could unfold as growing numbers of welfare recipients shift from reliance on welfare only to reliance on earnings or a combination of welfare and earnings — or to loss of welfare benefits without employment when they reach their time limit. These analyses are consistent with a priority established at the 1995 International Conference on Nutrition — that is, to assess, analyze, and monitor nutrition situations in industrialized countries (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1995). In the present study, the assessment is made on a nutritionally vulnerable population at a potentially sensitive point in their economic trajectories. Because of the importance of external food resources to poor families, food insecurity is also examined in relation to the use of three food assistance programs: food stamps; the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); and emergency food services. All these programs are designed to help low-income families avoid hunger and to acquire a more nutritious diet.

II. Description of the Research Samples

A. The Survey Sample

About one-third of the 1998-1999 survey sample were working without receiving cash welfare benefits at the time of the interview. Over half the women were welfare recipients (55.6 percent), but about one-third of these recipients were combining welfare and work. Just over 11 percent of the sample reported that they were neither working nor receiving welfare.

As shown in Table 1, there were site differences with regard to these work and welfare groups. Los Angeles had the highest percentage of women who were on welfare and the lowest percentage of women who worked without getting cash welfare benefits. Miami, by contrast, had the fewest welfare recipients and also substantially more women who neither worked nor were on welfare. These site differences could reflect policy differences: In Florida, there is a two-year time limit for receipt of welfare benefits; Florida is also the site with the lowest benefit level. In California, the five-year time limit will be applied only to recipients and not to their children; California's benefit levels are the most generous of the Urban Change sites. Moreover, Florida's welfare reform policies were implemented more than a year before California's welfare policies were signed into law.[6]

As indicated in Table 1, there were also substantial differences in the background characteristics of the four groups, suggesting that there may be structural impediments to moving women from one group to another, as is the aim of welfare reform. Women who received welfare

[6]Between 1994 and 1997, there was a 28.0 percent decline in the number of cash welfare recipients in Miami-Dade County, compared with a 4.6 percent decline in Los Angeles County, despite the fact that both sites had the same 1998 unemployment rate (6.5 percent) (Quint et al., 1999).

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 1

Selected Characteristics of the Urban Change 1998-1999 Survey Sample, by Work and Welfare Status[a]

County or Characteristic	Full Sample	Working, Not on Welfare	Working, on Welfare	Not Working, on Welfare	Not Working, Not on Welfare
Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) (%)***	25.7	30.4	23.2	23.9	22.0
Los Angeles County (%)***	24.4	16.9	35.9	27.9	17.6
Miami-Dade County (%)***	23.8	27.6	18.7	19.6	34.8
Philadelphia County (%)*	26.1	25.2	22.2	28.7	25.5
Average age***	33.7	33.3	32.8	33.8	35.4
African-American (%)**	68.3	66.9	72.2	69.5	62.1
Hispanic (%)*	24.5	24.7	21.4	24.2	29.5
White, not Hispanic (%)**	5.4	6.6	4.6	4.1	7.5
Not a U.S. citizen (%)	9.7	10.4	8.1	9.1	12.1
Married, living with spouse (%)***	8.8	14.4	2.7	3.6	19.2
Living with partner, unmarried (%)***	10.1	13.6	8.9	7.6	10.0
Average household size[b]***	4.2	3.9	4.4	4.4	4.0
Average number of own children in household***	2.4	2.1	2.6	2.7	2.1
No children in household (%)***	4.1	5.0	1.4	2.0	12.5
Average age of youngest child ***	6.7	7.3	6.1	6.2	7.9
Child under age 6 in household (%)***	47.1	42.7	53.0	50.6	39.3
Does not have a diploma or GED (%)***	45.8	30.9	49.5	54.9	52.6
Has a GED or high school diploma (%)***	36.1	42.5	33.8	32.2	34.0
Has some college credit (%)***	18.1	26.7	16.7	12.9	13.5
Received welfare within prior 12 months (%)***	67.7	25.5	100.0	100.0	32.3
Ever employed, prior 12 months (%)***	65.5	100.0	100.0	27.3	38.2
Average household income, past month[c] ($)***	1,276.28	1,732.65	1,391.04	935.86	1,014.96
Sample size	3,765	1,240	626	1,468	431

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

A two-tailed analysis of variance was applied to test the significance of group differences. Statistical significance levels are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the four groups based on their self-reported work and welfare status at the time of the interview.

[b]Household size refers to the total number of people residing in the household, including the respondent.

[c]Total monthly income includes family income from all sources, including earnings, welfare, food stamps, child support, and so on. However, the income derived from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is not included, and therefore income for many of those working is underestimated.

— whether they worked or not — tended to be nonwhite, to be living without a husband or partner, and to have more and younger children living with them.[7]

The education status of the four groups of women was strikingly different. The majority of working nonrecipients had a diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate, and over one-fourth had some college credit. By contrast, about half the women in the other three groups did not have their basic education credentials. Women who combined work and welfare had somewhat more education than the two nonworking groups.

All the women had received cash welfare at some point in their lives. About one-fourth of the women in the two groups not currently on welfare were fairly recent leavers — that is, had been on welfare but left in the year prior to the interview. Miami had the highest percentage of women who had left welfare more than one year prior to the interview (not shown in the table), consistent with the rapid and early decline of the welfare caseload in Florida relative to most other states.

The majority of women (91.9 percent) had worked for pay at some point in their lives. Among those who were not employed at the time of the interview, approximately one-third had had paid employment in the prior 12 months. Nonemployed women who were not welfare recipients (38.2 percent) were more likely than women who received welfare only (27.3 percent) to have worked in the prior year.

As might be expected, the income differences among women in the four groups were sizable. Women who worked with no welfare benefits had an average household income of over $1,700 for the month prior to the interview — nearly twice the average income of women who received welfare without working ($935.86).[8] Note that among these two groups, differences in average household size were also significant: the welfare-only group had the largest number of household members, and the working-only group had the smallest. Calculations reveal that the average gap in per capita monthly income between the welfare-only group and the working, on-welfare group was even greater ($444.27 versus $212.70) than the average gap in overall income. Women who were able to combine work and welfare were much better off financially than those with no earned income.

Because the four research groups are composed of women with sizable demographic differences, the analyses that examined food hardship in these groups controlled statistically for a number of background characteristics, so that food hardship would better reflect the *circumstances* of their work and welfare status, rather than simply the characteristics that may have led them to rely on different income sources. Specifically, the analyses controlled for site, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, age, educational attainment, number of children, whether the

---

[7]Women who neither worked nor received welfare were most likely to be married and were also most likely not to have any children living with them. These women were significantly more likely than women in the other three groups to have income from a pension and from disability insurance (SSI) in their own names; they were also more likely to be living in households with other people who worked, received a pension, or had disability insurance (not shown in tables).

[8]Average household income includes income for all family members from all sources, including food stamps, as reported by survey respondents.

woman was living with a husband or partner, whether she had a preschool-age child in the household, and how much time had elapsed between May 1995 (the date used to draw the sample from administrative records) and the date of the interview.[9]

B. The Ethnographic Sample

For the purposes of this working paper, ethnographic data from two sites (Cleveland and Philadelphia) were analyzed. Transcripts from in-depth interviews with 67 women were available for analysis.

The women recruited for the ethnography were all welfare recipients, and only a handful of them had any paid employment at the time of the initial interview; thus, the sample would fall primarily into the welfare-only group. The typical ethnographic respondent was in her early thirties, but the women ranged in age from their twenties to their forties. Only a few of the women were married or living with a partner, but all were caring for children. In Cleveland and Philadelphia, two-thirds of the respondents were African-American, and the others were white.[10]

III. Findings on Food Insecurity and Hunger

A. Survey Findings

The Household Food Security Scale consists of 18 items stating food-related worries and problems. Table 2 shows the Household Food Security Scale items, together with the percentage of women in the research survey sample who indicated that they had experienced the problem in the previous year. The majority of women (65.3 percent) indicated that they had worried about food running out before they could buy more. Small — but nevertheless worrisome — percentages of women had experienced the most severe problems, such as having had to cut the size of their children's meals because of lack of money (8.2 percent) or having children who did not eat for a whole day (1.6 percent).[11]

Scoring of the Household Food Security Scale is based on the number of affirmative responses to the items. Total scores are used to establish cutoffs[12] for assigning people to one of four categories: food secure; food insecure, without hunger; food insecure, with moderate hunger; and food insecure, with severe hunger. As shown in Table 3, slightly more than half the families in the Urban Change sample were food secure. Fully 48.8 percent were classified as be-

---

[9]Time elapsed was controlled because the field work was completed over a 12-month period, during a time when there were welfare and food stamp caseload declines and a strengthening of the economy.

[10]The ethnographic interviews in Philadelphia and Cleveland were conducted in three neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty and welfare receipt. By design, two predominantly African-American neighborhoods and one predominantly white neighborhood were selected.

[11]The scale is administered in a three-stage format with screeners. All households are asked the first five questions (questions 4 and 5 are omitted if there are no children in the household). Questioning ends at this point for respondents with nonaffirmative responses to all questions, but it continues for those with any affirmative responses (stage 1 screener). Respondents continue past the stage 2 screener if there are affirmative responses to any of the next six questions.

[12]Different cutoff scores are used for families with and without children in the household.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 2

Household Food Security Scale, Item Frequencies

In the past 12 months...	Sample Affirming (%)
Stage 1 Questions	
1. Worried that our food would run out before we got money to buy more.	65.3
2. Food that we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more.	56.2
3. Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.	34.8
4. Relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed my children because I was running out of money to buy food.[a]	47.9
5. Couldn't feed my children a balanced meal, because I couldn't afford that.[a]	29.7
Stage 2 Questions	
6. My children weren't eating enough because I just couldn't afford enough food.[a]	17.5
7. Adult in household cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food.	21.4
8. Adult cut or skipped meals for 3 or more months.	16.7
9. Ate less than I felt I should because there wasn't enough money for food.	25.2
10. Hungry but didn't eat because I couldn't afford enough food.	14.1
11. Lost weight because I didn't have enough money for food.	8.5
Stage 3 Questions	
12. Adult in household did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food.	8.7
13. Adult did not eat for a whole day during 3 or more months.	6.6
14. Cut the size of children's meals because there wasn't enough money for food.[a]	8.2
15. Children skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food.[a]	5.0
16. Children skipped meals during three or more months.[a]	4.0
17. Children were hungry, but I just couldn't afford more food.[a]	5.6
18. Children ever not eaten for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food.[a]	1.6

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: The Household Food Security Scale is administered in three stages; respondents affirming (indicating agreement with) any of the first five questions are asked questions in stage 2, and those affirming any stage 2 questions are asked questions in stage 3. The percentages shown are for the entire sample of Urban Change survey respondents who completed the stage 1 questions.

[a]Households without children are not asked items 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, or 18.

ing food insecure; there were 4,600 children living in these families. In the 1998 CPS, 10.2 percent of all American households — and 38.8 percent of households with incomes below 50 percent of poverty — were food insecure (Bickel et al., 1999). Over 15 percent of the Urban Change sample experienced hunger in the previous year, compared with 3.6 percent nationally. Over 300 children lived in families classified as having severe hunger.[13]

Figure 1, as well as Table 3, shows that, even after statistically controlling several background characteristics of the women, food security varied significantly in the four work and welfare groups. Food security was highest — and hunger lowest — among women who worked and did not receive welfare. Women who neither worked nor got welfare were least likely to be food secure. Welfare recipients' food security fell in between these two groups, and welfare recipients who worked were only modestly better off than those who did not. These findings are consistent with other studies that have found food adequacy positively correlated with employment and negatively correlated with welfare receipt, despite the fact that almost all welfare recipients receive food stamps (Alaimo et al., 1998; Cutts et al., 1998; Kendall et al., 1995; Johnson et al., 1999).

The Household Food Security Scale combines into one scale items measuring three aspects of food hardship: (1) household food insecurity, (2) adult hunger, and (3) children's hunger. Generally, the severe-hunger category of the scale has, for households with children, been used as a proxy for hunger among children (Hamilton, Cook, Thompson, Buron, Frongillo, Olson, & Wehler, 1997). However, there is some concern that estimates of children's hunger based on the household-level measure might be inadequate. Consequently, researchers have begun to explore the construction of separate measures of child hunger using the eight items in the scale dealing specifically with children (Nord & Bickel, 1999).[14] These researchers have developed a measure with three categories: child hunger, reduced-quality diet for children, and no child hunger or reduced-quality diet.

In their analysis of national data from the 1995 and 1998 Current Population Surveys, Food Security Supplement, Nord and Bickel (1999) found that the measure of hunger based on child-specific items resulted in hunger in 1.12 percent of the households with children, compared with 0.87 percent when using the household-level measure for the same household — a 29 percent higher prevalence rate. Additionally, some 9.2 percent of households with children provided the children with reduced-quality diets.

Using the child-specific scale in the Urban Change survey sample, children in 30.6 percent of the families with children under 18 experienced some food deprivation (Table 3). Moreover, 4.8 percent of the children — compared with only 3.8 percent when using the severe-hunger category of the full household scale — experienced hunger. Differences in the four work-

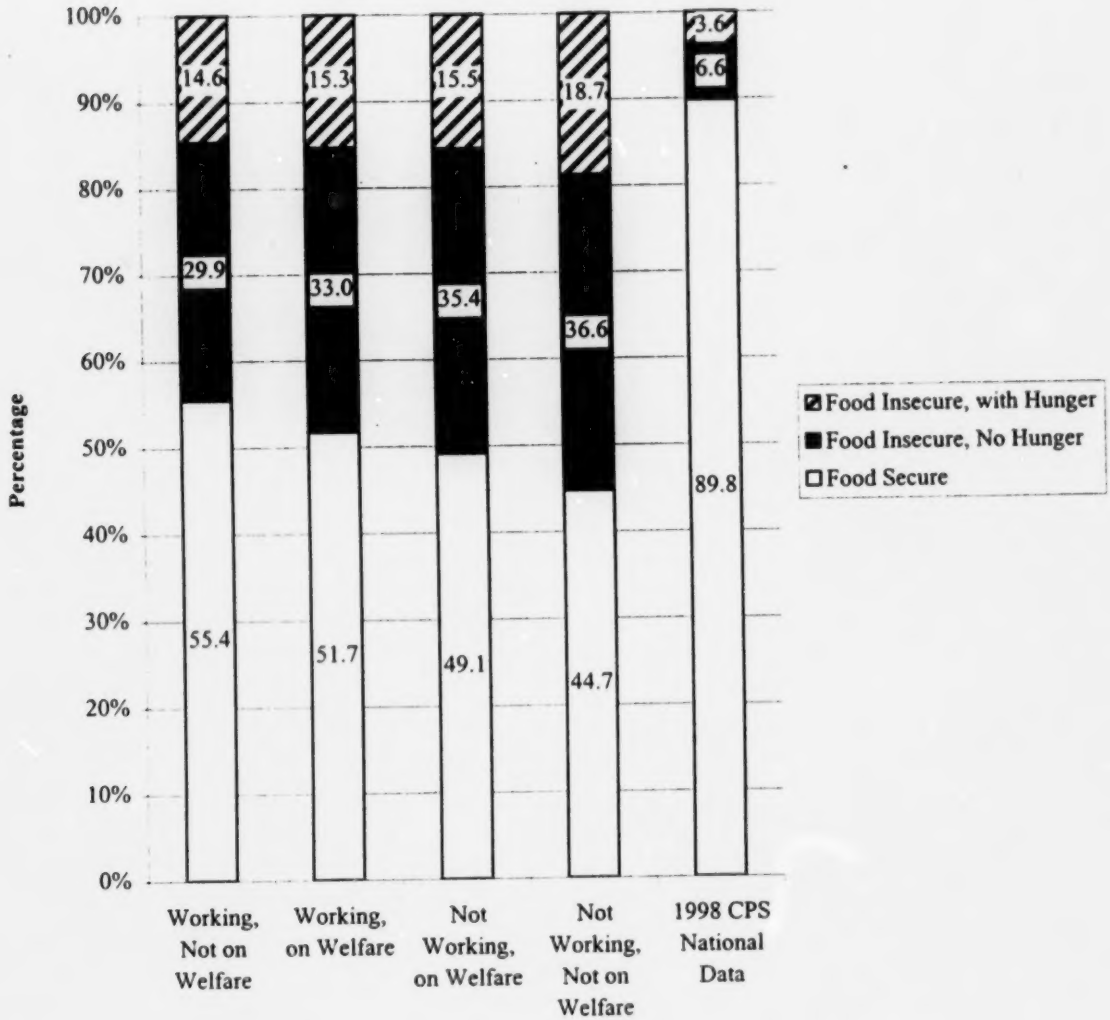
[13]As previously noted, the analyses that examined food hardships in the four research groups controlled statistically for the following background characteristics: site, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, age, educational attainment, number of children, whether the woman was living with a husband or partner, whether she had a preschool-age child in the household, and how much time had elapsed between May 1995 and the date of the interview. Thus, the numbers in Table 3 are regression-adjusted percentages. Appendix Table A.1 presents the full regression model for the probability of being food secure, and Appendix Table A.2 presents unadjusted numbers.

[14]The items in the child measure are items 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 in Table 2.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Figure 1

Food Security,
by Work and Welfare Status[a] and Current Population Survey



SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTE: [a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the four groups based on their self-reported work and welfare status at the time of the interview.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 3

Food Sufficiency, Food Security, and Child Hunger, by Work and Welfare Status[a]

Outcome (%)	Full Sample	Working, Not on Welfare	Working, on Welfare	Not Working, on Welfare	Not Working, Not on Welfare
Food Security Scale[b]					
Food secure***	51.1	55.4	51.7	49.1	44.7
Food insecure without hunger*	33.3	29.9	33.0	35.4	36.6
Food insecure with moderate hunger	11.7	11.4	11.5	11.4	14.1
Food insecure with severe hunger	3.8	3.2	3.8	4.1	4.6
Child Hunger[c]					
No child hunger or reduced-quality diet*	69.3	71.9	71.1	67.7	64.8
Child with reduced-quality diet**	25.8	23.6	23.1	27.4	30.8
Child with hunger	4.8	4.5	5.7	4.8	4.4
Food insufficient[d]*	34.6	32.9	31.4	36.1	39.4
Sample size	3,680	1,213	609	1,441	417

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

The percentages are adjusted using linear analysis of covariance procedures, controlling for nine background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Statistical significance levels for the adjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the four groups based on their self-reported work and welfare status at the time of the interview.

[b]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

[c]Respondents were placed in one of the three child hunger categories based on responses to the eight items on the Household Food Security Scale that concerned the nutritional status of children under age 18 in the household. Households without children (4.3 percent of the sample) are not included.

[d]A respondent was classified as food insufficient if she reported that her family "sometimes" or "always" did not get enough food to eat.

welfare groups were generally consistent with the results for the overall food security scale. Children in the no-work, no-welfare group were most likely to have had dietary restrictions; while children of working mothers in the two working groups were least likely to have restrictions on the quality of their diets. Children's *hunger*, however, was not related to their mothers' source of income. Strikingly, about 5 percent of the children in *all* groups had experienced hunger in the previous year. It should be noted that children classified as having neither hunger nor a reduced-quality diet could nevertheless be living in households with food insecurity, consistent with studies that have found that parents tend to shield their children from hunger insofar as possible (Nord & Bickel, 1999).

Survey respondents were also asked about food sufficiency. Women were classified as food insufficient if they said that they sometimes or often did not have enough food to eat. A somewhat different pattern emerged with this older measure of food adequacy, including a lower prevalence in the rate of food hardship.[15] Whereas about half the sample were classified as food insecure, only 35 percent were food insufficient. Differences between the two groups of women who worked were small, with just under one-third of them being food insufficient. Women on welfare only and, especially, women who neither worked nor received welfare were more likely to report food insufficiency than working women, consistent with the results for food security.

The relationship between income source and household food security was pursued further by focusing on the women's history of employment and welfare receipt. Table 4 focuses on employment history. Women were categorized as currently working, having worked in the previous 12 months but not currently working, having worked but not in the previous 12 months, or having never worked for pay. The group difference in food security after statistically adjusting for background characteristics was significant. Women who were currently working were most likely to be food secure. Those least likely to be food secure were women who had worked fairly recently (in the previous 12 months), but were not currently working; they were also the most likely to have experienced moderate hunger.[16]

Table 5, which shows food security in relation to welfare history, suggests further that income source *transitions* may have implications for food adequacy. Women were classified as currently receiving welfare, being a recent leaver (within the previous year), or having left welfare more than one year prior to the interview. The highest rate of food security was found among women who had left welfare more than one year earlier. By contrast, recent leavers were the least likely to be food secure and the most likely to be severely hungry. It might also be noted that, among the women who were neither working nor on welfare at the time of the interview — the group who were least food secure, as shown in Table 3 — some 8.7 percent had received welfare *in the prior month*, and these very recent leavers were especially unlikely to be food se-

---

[15]This difference is consistent with the fact that food insufficiency is closer to the definition of hunger than it is to the category food insecure without hunger. In this sample, the correlation between food insufficiency and hunger was .49 ($p < .001$), and the correlation between food insufficiency and insecure without hunger was .21.

[16]The dynamic aspects of income in relation to food sufficiency were recently explored in a paper by Gunderson and Gruber (forthcoming). Using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation over a nine-month period, these researchers found that food insufficient households not only had lower average incomes than those that are food sufficient but also faced more negative income shocks (events that cause a decline in household resources).

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 4

Food Security, by Employment History[a]

Food Security[b] (%)	Full Sample	Currently Employed	Employed in Past 12 Months, Not Now	Employed More Than 12 Months Ago	Never Employed
Food secure**	51.4	54.3	46.4	50.2	47.9
Food insecure without hunger**	33.5	31.1	36.0	34.5	39.4
Food insecure with moderate hunger	11.4	11.2	14.3	11.0	8.5
Food insecure with severe hunger	3.7	3.4	3.3	4.2	4.2
Sample size	3,506	1,704	529	979	294

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

The percentages are adjusted using linear analysis of covariance procedures, controlling for nine background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Statistical significance levels for the adjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the four employment groups based on their self-reported employment histories.

[b]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 5

Food Security, by Welfare History[a]

Food Security[b] (%)	Full Sample	Currently on Welfare	On Welfare Past 12 Months, Not Now	On Welfare More Than 12 Months Ago
Food secure**	51.1	49.8	47.4	54.8
Food insecure without hunger*	33.4	34.8	35.6	30.1
Food insecure with moderate hunger	11.7	11.4	11.3	12.4
Food insecure with severe hunger*	3.8	4.0	5.7	2.7
Sample size	3,681	2,051	447	1,183

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

The percentages are adjusted using linear analysis of covariance procedures, controlling for nine background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Statistical significance levels for the adjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the three welfare groups based on their self-reported welfare histories.

[b]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

cure. Only 35.1 percent of these women were food secure, compared with 45.6 percent of the group neither on welfare nor working who had *not* lost welfare in the prior month (not shown in the tables). Other studies have also found that food inadequacies are related to departure from welfare (Loprest, 1999) and, especially, to reductions or elimination of food stamps (Nelson, Brown, & Lurie, 1998; Rose, 1999).

There is abundant evidence that federal food programs such as Food Stamps and WIC have beneficial effects on the health and nutrition of participating families (for example, see Rose, Habicht, & Devaney, 1998; Owen & Owen, 1997; Moss & Carver, 1998; Cook, Sherman, & Brown, 1995: Devaney & Moffitt, 1991; Fraker, 1990). Nevertheless, it has repeatedly been found that food inadequacies are higher among families who receive food stamps (Alaimo et al., 1998; Cutts et al., 1998; Cohen et al., 1999), WIC (Rose & Oliveira, 1997; Kendall et al., 1995), and emergency food services such as groceries through food pantries (Cutts et al., 1998; Starkey, Gray-Donald, & Kuhnlein, 1999; Tarasuk & Beaton, 1999a) than among families who do not. Presumably, these relationships reflect the fact that poverty and material hardships, rather than receipt of benefits, adversely affect food security among poor families eligible for food benefit programs.[17] Thus, it appears that food-related benefits only partly mitigate the effects of poverty. Even within low-income families, it is likely that a relationship between food insecurity and receipt of food resources would persist because of self-selection: those experiencing the most severe material hardships are presumably more likely to turn to food programs for help.

In the present study of low-income families, the majority (69.5 percent) had received food stamp benefits in the previous month. About one-fourth of the sample (24.4 percent) participated in the WIC program.[18] A minority of women (5.2 percent) reported having used a food pantry or food bank in the month prior to the interview. The relationship between food insecurity and the use of these food resources was examined, and the results are presented in Table 6. As in earlier studies, families who received food stamps were significantly less food secure than families not receiving food stamps. Receipt of WIC, however, was not related to food security when background characteristics were controlled,[19] a finding that has also been observed in other studies (Cutts et al., 1998). Women who said they had used an emergency food service such as a food pantry or food bank in the prior month were more than twice as likely to have experienced hunger than women who did not use these services. Thus, even *within* low-income families, a relationship between food insecurity and receipt of food resources persists, presumably through self-selection: those experiencing the most severe material hardships appear to be most likely to turn to food programs for help.

---

[17]Indeed, recent evidence from a sophisticated econometric model indicates that the anomalous result of food insufficiency being higher in households that receive food stamps is because households with food insufficiency are more likely to receive food stamps (Gunderson & Oliveira, under review).

[18]Families are eligible for WIC if their family income is less than 185 percent of the poverty line and if the woman is either pregnant or has children under age 5. In the Urban Change sample, 45.2 percent of the women on welfare (all of whom would be income-eligible) were eligible for WIC on the basis of their pregnancy status or age of their youngest child, but only 57.6 percent of these women were participating in the program.

[19]WIC participation was associated with less severe hunger and a greater likelihood that a child would experience no food hardships when background characteristics were *not* controlled.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 6

Food Security, by Receipt of Food Assistance in Prior Month

Food Security[d] (%)	Received Food Stamps[a]		Received WIC[b]		Received Emergency Food[c]	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Food secure	48.9	55.6 ***	51.9	50.9	24.9	52.6 ***
Food insecure without hunger	35.3	29.1 ***	33.5	33.3	39.4	33.1
Food insecure with moderate hunger	11.5	12.4	11.2	11.9	26.3	10.9 ***
Food insecure with severe hunger	4.3	2.9	3.4	3.9	9.5	3.5 ***
Sample size	2,522	1,109	900	2,781	193	3,490

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

The percentages are adjusted using linear analysis of covariance procedures, controlling for nine background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Statistical significance levels for the adjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]A respondent was considered to be a food stamp recipient if she or any other family member received any food stamp benefits in the month prior to the interview.

[b]A respondent was considered to be participating in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) if she or any other family member received food through the WIC program in the month prior to the interview.

[c]A respondent was considered to have used emergency food services if she or any other family member received emergency good from a church, food pantry, or food bank in the month prior to the interview.

[d]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

It is worth noting that food hardships varied significantly in the four Urban Change sites. Table 7 shows that families in Los Angeles and Miami were especially likely to be food insecure.[20] Children in those sites were also more likely to have reduced-quality diets or to experience hunger than children in Cleveland or Philadelphia. However, across all four sites, families where the mother neither worked nor received welfare benefits were among the least food secure of any families (not shown in the table).

B. Ethnographic Findings

Data from the ethnographic interviews provide a richer understanding of the nature of food problems among poor families. Although ethnographic respondents were not administered the Household Food Security Scale, they were asked a number of questions about food expenditures, food deprivations, and the use of emergency food services. Based on responses to these questions, the women were categorized into a food security category.[21] In the ethnographic sample, some 53.0 percent of the women[22] were food insecure. Here are some examples of how these women described their food situations:

> *It's not to the point where we didn't have nothing at all. I mean, it's gotten to the point where you had to eat this or you go hungry, but not to where we didn't eat at all.*
>
> *The other day, we ran out of everything and we had to go to a church and get food. For canned goods and stuff like that.*
>
> [Interviewer:] *In the last year, have you run out of food because you couldn't afford it?* [Respondent:] *Yeah. . . . It happened all the time.*
>
> *We have been down to eating butter noodles. You know, but at least it's something.*
>
> *We try to make our meals stretch for two days at a time, because otherwise we wouldn't have anything for the next day's meal.*

Several women (10.6 percent of the ethnographic sample) acknowledged that they had experienced food shortages accompanied by hunger. These women were sometimes forced to extreme measures to obtain food — measures such as selling their blood and panhandling:

---

[20]The numbers in Table 7 are not statistically adjusted. However, significant site differences persisted even when the women's age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, citizenship status, number of children, presence of a preschool-age child, and living arrangements were controlled. It is worth noting that the Urban Change site differences in food insecurity are consistent with state differences, based on data from national surveys. Pennsylvania has one of the lowest rates of food insecurity in the nation (7.1 percent), and Ohio also has a rate significantly below the national average (8.5 percent). By contrast, both Florida (11.5 percent) and California (11.4 percent) have higher-than-average rates of food insecurity (Nord, Jemison, & Bickel, 1999).

[21]To ensure intercoder reliability, transcripts were independently coded by two people, who were able to resolve the handful of categorization discrepancies that occurred.

[22]Consistent with the survey results, food insecurity was somewhat higher among the ethnographic respondents in Cleveland (57 percent) than in Philadelphia (51 percent).

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table 7

Food Security and Child Hunger, by Site

Outcome (%)	Full Sample	Cleveland	Los Angeles	Miami	Philadelphia
Food Security Scale[a]					
Food secure***	51.2	54.9	43.7	46.2	59.0
Food insecure without hunger***	33.5	31.1	37.5	37.6	27.3
Food insecure with moderate hunger***	11.8	11.3	15.4	10.8	9.8
Food insecure with severe hunger*	3.9	2.7	3.4	5.4	3.9
Child Hunger[b]					
No child hunger or reduced-quality diet***	69.3	74.5	62.4	64.6	75.1
Child with reduced-quality diet***	26.0	22.2	32.4	29.7	19.6
Child with hunger	4.8	3.3	5.2	5.7	5.3
Sample size	3,738	962	915	888	973

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: Calculations for this table used data for all sample members in the 1998-1999 Urban Change survey who were or had previously been welfare recipients. The actual sample sizes for individual outcomes presented in this table may fall short of the reported sample sizes because of missing or unusable items from some interviews.

The percentages in this table are not statistically adjusted.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Statistical significance levels for the unadjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

[b]Respondents were placed in one of the three child hunger categories based on responses to the eight items on the Household Food Security Scale that concerned the nutritional status of children under age 18 in the household. Households without children (4.3 percent of the sample) are not included.

I donated plasma, took in cans, uh, we ended up asking my mother-in-law if she could help us in any way, my mother if she could help us in any way, any way we could get help, we were asking. . . . We managed. I mean, it wasn't easy but we managed.

There was times when my daughter didn't have [food] and I've even done real things like let somebody watch my daughter for the day and go out and go to Center City where nobody knew me and pretend I was lost and get $5 from every person. Come back with like $100 and then go food shopping.

I got to live day by day for food for my kids. I have to call down to the shelter things to get them to send you food and you hate doing that because it's embarrassing, too, but I have to live day by day. I have to do things so my kids can eat.

As the last two excerpts suggest, the women were especially concerned about feeding their children. Many of them indicated that they would go to great lengths, including going without food themselves, to protect their children from hunger — a pattern that has been found in many other studies:

Well, I would feed my kid before I would eat, so there might have been a day I went without eating, but it didn't hurt me.

I'll go maybe three days at a time without eating just so the kids can have their three meals a day.

I don't worry about me, just for my kids because I can go a day without eating, but as long as my kids [eat].

[Interviewer:] *Do you ever go without food?* [Respondent:] *Sometimes I do. The kids never do, I will go without eating before I will let the kids.*

All the ethnographic respondents received food stamps. Food stamps did not ensure that all these families could avoid food insecurity, but many women made comments suggesting that food stamps played a major role in helping them avoid severe food deprivation:

If it wasn't for food stamps, we'd probably starve to death.

That food stamps, like I'm glad I have them. They help out a lot, they fill my refrigerator.

I basically look forward to my food stamps, you know, every month. . . . That'd be the only thing I'd really miss.

Although about half of both the survey and ethnographic samples were classified as food secure, the ethnographic interviews suggest that the term "food security" among poor families might sometimes be misleading. Most of the mothers in the ethnographic study who were classified as food secure nevertheless expended considerable energy and pieced together numerous strategies to make sure that there was an adequate amount of food for themselves and their chil-

dren — activities that are plausibly less necessary or extensive among middle-class families who are food secure. Some of these strategies are included as items in the Household Food Security Scale (for example, cutting down on the size of meal portions [item 7] or changing the composition of meals to incorporate lower-cost foods [item 4]), and affirmation of these items contributes to being classified as food insecure. However, other coping strategies designed to avoid hunger and food deprivation are not covered in the scale.[23]

One strategy that several women who were food secure mentioned was careful and skillful shopping, sometimes involving the purchase of such goods as day-old bread or older meats:

> *I'm one of those real picky and careful and choicey shoppers, like old folks. . . . I basically shop when the sales are on. I get something there, then I go to Finast, get that on sale, then I go to here, there, you know. I just get everything that's on sale.*

> *I buy on deals. I mean, like um, a lot of people when they go to the grocery store, they see those manager's specials, they won't buy those. But, it's a good thing to buy because legally the meat market cannot sell them if they're bad meats. I mean, I've bought packages of steaks, where I've only spent $2 for six steaks.*

> *I learned how to, you know, what to buy and what not to buy. Where to shop, where to look for sales. I save a lot from Aldi's. I do a lot of shopping there.*

> *I shop at all different markets on food stamp day. I go to Pathmark and get the specials, I'll go to Save-a-Lot. I'll go to all the stores. . . . I clip coupons from the paper and stuff.*

Mothers, including ones who were food secure, often relied routinely on supportive friends or relatives for meals or for loans that enabled them to feed their families:

> *I know that if I run out of anything, you know, a couple friends of mine that I've know almost 30 years, if I need something I can call then, you know, and they usually get it for me somehow.*

> *Their* [respondent's children's] *aunt, her husband had went and closed down this swell house for Cisco, which is the restaurant type, ah, they service restaurants. And she gave me big cans of soup, you know, ah, she gave me this big old box of fish . . . stuff like that. Bags of french fries and stuff, you know, just out of the clear blue. So the Lord is always making a way.*

---

[23]In the 1995 CPS Food Security Supplement, 30 potential items for a food security measure were administered, and these items included various coping strategies. The coping mechanisms appear to fall into two categories: "internal" strategies, such as cutting the size of a meal, and "external" strategies that involve going outside the household to enlarge the food supply, such as using a food bank. The five external-strategy items failed to meet statistical criteria for inclusion in the food security scale, although several of the "internal" coping mechanisms *are* included. It has been speculated that this is because internal strategies directly contribute to the severity of the food deprivation experience, while external strategies are designed to *reduce* the severity (Bickel, personal communication, November 23, 1999).

Well, pretty much my family will help me . . . when it is time to go to the market or whenever I am lacking like bread, milk, and cereal, and they will pick it up for me or give me a couple of dollars to hold me over to whenever. That is pretty much how I have made it.

My friends, they get their money before I do, and they loan me something until I get mine, and then I pay them back when I get mine. . . . Yeah, back and forth like that. That's how we can survive!

Two of the women explicitly mentioned smoking as a strategy to manage food resources:[23]

Sometimes smoking is cheaper than eating. You know, a pack of cigarettes will last you all day, better than eating three meals. . . .

Current or recent food bank usage was mentioned as a strategy by just over half the ethnographic respondents. (The percentage is much higher than food bank usage reported in the survey, in part because the survey asked about using a food bank only in the *prior* month.) Some used food banks at special times, particularly around Thanksgiving or Christmas, but others relied on food banks as a normal part of their strategy to avoid hunger or augment food resources. Food bank usage typically occurred at the end of the month, when food stamps ran out.

I'm always, every other week — after I lost my job — going up to the food bank, lying about where I'm living so I can get more food from different food banks to feed my daughter.

You have a lot of, um, I don't know what they call them — food banks through churches during the, well, toward the end of the month, usually the third week in the month. A lot of us have to go to these churches to get food bags.

You need to know where your food bank is, because sometimes you can't finish off he month with your food stamps. And even with my mother in work, sometimes we cannot afford to keep food.

What I do is wait 'til the last two weeks of the month and get those two bags of groceries when I need it the most.

All the women in the ethnographic sample who used food banks were classified *post hoc* as being food insecure, in keeping with the conceptual definition of food security as having access to adequate food "without resorting to emergency food supplies" (Anderson, 1990). It is possible that women who used food banks *were* food secure and were simply clever in managing all available food resources to ensure their families' food security. However, it is also possible that the Household Food Security Scale misclassifies some poor women as food secure when, in

[23]In the survey sample, hunger (moderate/severe) was modestly, but significantly, associated with smoking: $r = .07$, $p < .01$.

fact, their array of "external" coping strategies evinces a daunting struggle that most people who are truly food secure never face.

There are also subtle hints in the ethnographic data that these women were extremely proud of their ability to feed their children. They were not always able to pay all their bills, but they made every effort to put food on the table.

> *I mean I always have food in my house now 'cause I make sure of that . . . that I always have food.*
>
> *I'm going to make sure they eat. 'Cause they love to eat!*
>
> [Interviewer:] *Is there a time when you needed food but couldn't afford to eat?*
> [Respondent:] *Never. 'Cause I'm going to buy food first.*
>
> *I keep them clean. I keep them fed. I don't go out there cashing in my food stamps. I'm one of those ones who is trying to do the right thing.*

There were also a few references in the ethnographic interviews to mothers' fears that if the children were not adequately fed, the children would be taken away from them. If there is pride associated with maintaining adequate food — and, conversely, shame or fear in not being able to do so — it is possible that the survey measure would lead to underreporting of food insecurity by some.

In summary, the ethnographic data provide rich qualitative descriptions of the food problems of poor urban families and the strategies they use to manage food resources and avoid hunger. There were very few women who did not have to piece together a complex array of tactics to ensure that their families' food needs were satisfied. The use and management of food stamps appeared to be the centerpiece of these tactics.

IV. Discussion

Nutritional status is an indicator of wellness and, thus, an important health monitoring gauge (Margetts & Jackson, 1993; Najman, 1993; Starkey et al., 1999). The deprivation of a basic need such as food is, of course, undesirable in its own right, but it is also associated with nutritional, health, and developmental problems that make it an important focus for public policy concern. For example, food insufficiency or insecurity has been found to be associated with nutrient intake deficiencies (Kendall et al., 1995, 1996; Rose, 1999; Rose & Oliveira, 1997; Tarasuk & Beaton, 1999b); obesity and eating disorders (Olson, 1999; Kendall et al., 1996); and fatigue, illness, and depression in adults (Hamelin, Habicht, & Beaudry, 1999). Moreover, there is increasing evidence that food hardship is related to a variety of problems in children, including elevated health problems (otitis media, colds, headaches); increased school absences; concentration deficits; impaired cognitive functioning; and behavior problems (Hamelin et al., 1999; Murphy, Wehler, Pagano, Little, Kleinman, & Jellinek, 1998; Scott & Wehler, 1998; Wehler, Scott, Anderson, Summer, & Parker, 1995).

It is clear, then, that food insecurity is an issue of pressing social concern. Despite the

current strength of the U.S. economy — and despite dramatic declines in participation in the Food Stamp Program, which could be viewed as indicating lowered need for food assistance — millions of American families experience food-related hardships. Not surprisingly, as the data in this paper indicate, food insecurity is particularly acute among urban families who have relied on welfare. For the Urban Change survey sample as a whole, half the families were food insecure — substantially higher than the 10.2 percent rate found nationally and higher also than the 38.8 percent rate among households with incomes below 50 percent of poverty in 1998 (Bickel et al., 1999) — but virtually identical to the rate found in a recent national survey of food stamp participants (Cohen et al., 1999). Another major finding is that 30.6 percent of the families in the Urban Change survey sample have children with reduced-quality diets or hunger, compared with 9.2 percent of households with children nationally (Nord & Bickel, 1999).

Women in the Urban Change survey sample who had left welfare and secured paid employment were better off in terms of food security than those who continued to rely on welfare, which is consistent with the fact that their incomes were higher. However, it cannot yet be determined whether welfare reform policies that encourage (or mandate) labor force participation will result in improved food security, because it is not clear that all recipients will be able to secure employment or that employment will increase their income. It should be kept in mind that, in the Urban Change survey sample, the women who were working had fewer barriers to employment than women who were not working. For example, they had better education credentials than women still on welfare, and they had fewer and older children. Thus, the women who were working and had already left welfare prior to time limits were plausibly among the best suited of the caseload for transitioning into employment.

Many of the women in the welfare-only group would fall into a category that is increasingly referred to as the "hard to employ." These women have multiple barriers to employment, including structural and human capital barriers (limited work experience, low educational attainment, low proficiency in English, preschool-age children) as well as health barriers. For example, among the women in the Urban Change sample, nearly 9 percent of the nonemployed welfare recipients (compared with under 2 percent of the employed nonrecipients) described themselves as being in poor health. More than one-third of those in the welfare, no-work group said they had a health problem that limits the amount or kind of work they can do, compared with about 11 percent of the women who worked and were getting no welfare (not shown in the tables). If such structural and health problems persist, then some of these women are likely to become members of the no-work, no-welfare group when they reach the time limits.[24]

Women with neither work nor welfare income had the least favorable food security outcomes. Many studies prior to welfare reform have found that a sizable percentage of women who exit from welfare do not have jobs, indicating that welfare reform is not responsible for creating this group. However, when the time limits take effect, it is plausible that this group will grow and that its composition and resources may change (for example, smaller percentages may be in the

[24]It will be possible to test this hypothesis, along with other conjectures that appear in this discussion, at a subsequent point in the Urban Change project when longitudinal data become available.

group as a result of a marriage). Thus, it can be conjectured that women who are unable to find employment when they leave welfare may be especially vulnerable to food hardships.

The results of this study also suggest that, among these low-income families with limited or no financial cushion, transitions from one income source to another can leave them especially vulnerable. Nonworking women who had worked in the prior year, as well as recent welfare leavers, had particularly unfavorable food security outcomes. Although the ultimate effects of welfare reform are not yet known, one consequence is likely to be that women will be going through more income source transitions than ever before. Women undergoing such transitions often experience numerous other potentially stressful changes in their lives (Edin et al., 1999). Women who leave welfare for work have to contend with new job demands and coordination of work and child care schedules, with making sure their children are safe and well-supervised in their absence, and with keeping their households functioning given less time to do so. Working single mothers will likely have less time and possibly less energy to pursue "external" strategies to augment their food resources. This may lead some women to increasingly pursue "internal" strategies as a means to stretch limited food. However, it is also possible that changes in the welfare system (for example, more transitional benefits) will support transitions to work more effectively than was previously the case.

Although levels of food security were significantly different for women in the four work and welfare groups in the Urban Change survey sample, it is noteworthy that the differences were not substantial. Nearly half of all the working nonrecipients were food insecure, and 15 percent of them experienced hunger. The children of nearly 1 out of 4 of these working women were exposed to reduced-quality diets, and nearly 5 percent of them experienced hunger. These results are broadly consistent with evidence that working poor women experience as much material hardship as welfare-reliant women (Edin & Lein, 1997). Thus, even if welfare reform succeeds in moving welfare recipients off of welfare and into paid employment, sizable numbers of them are likely to continue having problems acquiring adequate food for their families. This may be especially true if these hard-to-employ women take even lower-paying (and possibly unstable) jobs than women who have been able to leave welfare of their own accord. It is also important to note that the women who received welfare only and those who combined welfare with work were very close in their levels of food insecurity, which suggests that employment as a supplement to welfare does not necessarily ameliorate food hardships.

The findings also suggest that while the Household Food Security Scale may be a reliable and valid indicator of hunger for the U.S. population as a whole, it may not adequately describe the food problems that our poorest citizens face. The ethnographic data indicate that complex and elaborate "external" maneuvers are sometimes required to achieve and maintain food security in these poor urban families. The survey findings also raise some questions about the scale. As shown in Table 6, fully one-fourth of the women in the survey sample who used a food bank in the prior month were nevertheless classified as food secure. Furthermore, among the survey respondents classified as food secure, 35 percent indicated that they had worried that their food would run out before they got money to buy more (not shown in tables). Thus, individuals can be classified as food secure on the scale even though they would *conceptually* be described as food

insecure because their "ability to acquire acceptable foods *in socially acceptable ways* is limited *or uncertain"* (Anderson, 1990; emphasis added).[25]

The findings both here and in other recent studies on welfare leavers suggest that new and innovative solutions may be needed to ensure the food security of low-income families. The fundamental policy tenet that has guided federal nutrition programs for the past 15 years was articulated in the President's Task Force on Food Assistance in 1984: "Hunger is simply not acceptable in our society." More recently, the USDA established a policy to cut the prevalence of hunger in half by the year 2010, in support of the United States' 1996 pledge of this goal (along with similar pledges from 185 other countries) at the World Food Summit (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1996). This goal can be attained only by improving the food security of low-income families, such as those in the population from which the Urban Change sample was drawn.

Yet there are reasons to question whether such improvement can readily occur within the current policy framework. For example, PRWORA cut more funds from the Food Stamp Program than any other program, through reductions in household benefits and eligibility restrictions. Expenditures for the Food Stamp Program are projected to decline by about $22 billion from 1997 to 2002, relative to what they would have been without welfare reform (Gunderson, LeBlanc, & Kuhn, 1999). These reductions are the direct and intended effects of PRWORA. However, there is some concern that there might be an indirect effect, stemming from a possible link between welfare and food stamp exits. That is, despite the fact that most former welfare recipients remain eligible for food stamps even if they work,[26] it appears that some families leave the Food Stamp Program when they leave welfare. For example, Zedlewski and Brauner (1999) found that about two-thirds of former welfare recipients who also left the Food Stamp Program had incomes within the food stamp eligibility range. This phenomenon of people leaving both cash benefit and food stamp programs simultaneously despite ongoing food stamp eligibility has been noted by earlier researchers (Blank & Ruggles, 1993). However, the problem takes on greater significance currently because of the rapid decline in welfare caseloads — and also because the time limits will soon remove some recipients from those caseloads.

In recognition of some of the barriers to participating in the Food Stamp Program that confront the working poor, the Clinton Administration announced in July 1999 some administrative changes within the program.[27] The effect of implementing these changes is not yet known, but they appear to offer some prospect of decreasing the obstacles to food stamp participation for people who leave welfare for work.

Successful measures to improve Food Stamp Program participation might reduce but will not likely eliminate food insecurity and hunger. The present analysis is consistent with previous

---

[25]A similar point was made by Hamilton et al. (1997), who noted that the HFSS does not take into account coping strategies that are socially unacceptable.

[26]For example, a single mother with two children who works full time in a minimum wage job and has no other income could qualify for $260 a month in food stamps (assuming other conditions relating to other costs and deductions are met).

[27]The new initiative encompasses three executive actions: the issuance of guidance making it easier for families to own a reliable car while receiving food stamps; new rules that allow states new options to simplify income reporting requirements; and an information/outreach campaign to explain requirements for accessing food stamps.

research that has shown a link between food insecurity and food stamp receipt. As mentioned, this is probably due to self-selection — those who are food insecure are more likely to turn to food programs to help make ends meet than those who have other resources for feeding their families. Without food stamps there would almost assuredly be higher rates of food insecurity and hunger. However, food stamps in and of themselves do not guarantee food security — even among those who work. For example, among those women in the Urban Change sample who left welfare and were working, 32.1 percent received food stamps; yet among these working women who had maintained their food stamp benefits, 49.9 percent were food insecure, and 14.8 percent had experienced hunger in the previous year. It would appear that other reforms for targeting nutrition assistance to low-income workers may be needed to ensure that their basic food needs — and those of their children — are met.

It should be emphasized that the findings in this study do not address the question of whether welfare reform will ultimately improve or intensify the food hardships of poor inner-city families. The analyses reported here raise important questions about what *could* happen to food security as a result of welfare reform — questions that can better be addressed later in the Urban Change project and in other future studies.

APPENDIX A

Tables

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table A.1

Estimated Regression Coefficients for the Probability of Being Food Secure

Variable	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	p-Value
Constant	0.349	0.128	0.006 **
Site			
Cleveland	-0.063	0.023	0.005 **
Miami	-0.120	0.023	0.000 ***
Los Angeles	-0.136	0.024	0.000 ***
Race/ethnicity			
African-American	0.067	0.063	0.289
Hispanic	-0.046	0.064	0.475
White, not Hispanic	0.051	0.071	0.473
Education			
Less than high school/GED	-0.016	0.018	0.378
More than high school/GED	0.022	0.023	0.341
Number of children in household	-0.025	0.006	0.000 ***
Child under age 6 in household	0.033	0.020	0.087
Living with a partner/husband	0.073	0.021	0.001 ***
Age	-0.005	0.001	0.000 ***
Months elapsed between May 1995 and interview date	0.009	0.002	0.000 ***
Work/welfare status			
Working, not on welfare	0.106	0.028	0.000 ***
Working and on welfare	0.071	0.032	0.027 *
On welfare, not working	0.043	0.028	0.127
Sample size	3,680		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey.

NOTES: The percentages shown in Tables 3 through 5 are regression-adjusted numbers. The adjustments were made to account for the fact that the four work/welfare groups were substantially different demographically, in terms of characteristics known to be related to food security. Using linear analysis of covariance procedures, the analyses controlled for the following background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

This table presents the estimated regression coefficients for a major outcome in this paper, namely, food secure status. That is, the coefficients reflect the probability of being food secure versus food insecure.

A two-tailed analysis of variance was applied to test the significance of group differences. Statistical significance levels are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

The mean of the dependent variable (food secure) is .503. The r-square is .055. The F-statistic is 12.545.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

Table A.2

Food Security and Child Hunger, by Work and Welfare Status,[a] Unadjusted Percentages

Outcome (%)	Full Sample	Working, Not on Welfare	Working, on Welfare	Not Working, on Welfare	Not Working, Not on Welfare
Food Security Scale[b]					
Food secure***	51.2	58.2	50.5	47.5	44.6
Food insecure without hunger***	33.2	28.4	33.2	36.3	36.1
Food insecure with moderate hunger	11.8	10.4	12.6	12.0	14.2
Food insecure with severe hunger	3.8	3.0	3.7	4.2	5.2
Child Hunger[c]					
No child hunger or reduced-quality diet***	69.3	73.8	70.1	66.5	64.3
Child with reduced-quality diet***	25.9	22.1	24.3	28.3	31.0
Child with hunger	4.9	4.1	5.6	5.2	4.6
Sample size	3,734	1,231	620	1,459	424

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Urban Change Respondent Survey..

NOTES: The percentages shown in Tables 3 through 5 are regression-adjusted numbers. The adjustments were made to account for the fact that the four work/welfare groups were substantially different demographically, in terms of characteristics known to be related to food security. Using linear analysis of covariance procedures, the analyses controlled for the following background characteristics: site, age, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, citizenship status, marital/partner status, presence of a child under age 6, number of children in the household, and time elapsed between May 1995 and the interview date.

This table presents unadjusted group differences for the outcomes in Table 3.

Statistical significance levels for the adjusted group differences are indicated as * (.05), ** (.01), or *** (.001).

[a]Women in the Urban Change sample were categorized into one of the four groups based on their self-reported work and welfare status at the time of the interview.

[b]Respondents were placed in one of the four food security categories based on their scores on the 18-item Household Food Security Scale.

[c]Respondents were placed in one of the three child hunger categories based on responses to the eight items on the Household Food Security Scale that concerned the nutritional status of children under age 18 in the household. Households without children (4.3 percent of the sample) are not included.

References

Alaimo, K., Briefel, R. R., Frongillo, E. A., & Olson, C. M. (1998). Food insufficiency exists in the United States: Results from the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III). *American Journal of Public Health, 88* (3), 419-426.

Anderson, S. A., Ed. (1990). Core indicators of nutritional status for difficult-to-sample populations. *Journal of Nutrition, 120*, 1559-1600.

Bickel, G., Carlson, S., & Nord, M. (1999). Household Food Security in the United States, 1995-1998. Washington, DC: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.

Blank, R., & Ruggles, P. (1993). When do women use AFDC and food stamps? *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 4429.* New York, NY: NBER.

Briefel, R. R, & Wotecki, C. E. (1992). Development of the food insufficiency questions for the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *Journal of Nutrition Education, 24,* 24S-28S.

Carlson, S. J., Andrews, M. S., & Bickel, G. W. (1999). Measuring food insecurity and hunger in the United States: Development of a national benchmark measure and prevalence estimates. *Journal of Nutrition, 129*, 510S-516S.

Cohen, B., Ohls, J., Andrews, M., Ponza, M., Moreno, L., Zambrowski, A., & Cohen, R. (1999). *Food Stamp participants' food security and nutrient availability.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.

Cook, J., Sherman, L., & Brown, L. (1995). *Impact of food stamps on the dietary adequacy of poor children.* Boston: Tufts University School of Nutrition.

Cutts, D. B., Pheley, A. M., Geppert, J. S. (1998). Hunger in midwestern inner-city children. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 152* (5), 489-493.

Danziger, S., Corcoran, M., Danziger, S., Heflin, C., Kalil, A., Levine, J., Rosen, D., Seefeldt, K., Siefert, K., & Tolman, R. (1999). Barriers to employment of welfare recipients. Discussion Paper No. 1193-1199. Madison, WI: Institute for Research on Poverty.

Devaney, B., & Moffitt, R. (1991). Dietary effects of the Food Stamp Program. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 73*, 202-211.

Edin, K., & Lein, L. (1997). *Making ends meet.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Edin, K., Scott, E. K., London, A. S., & Mazelis, J. M. (1999). My children come first. Paper presented at the Joint Center for Poverty Research Conference, Washington, DC, Sept. 16-17.

Eisinger, P. (1999). Food pantries and welfare reform: Estimating the effect. *Focus, 20* (3), 23-28.

Figlio, D. N., Gunderson, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2000). The effects of the macroeconomy and welfare reform on food stamp caseloads. Paper presented at the Allied Social Science Association meeting, Boston, Jan. 7-9.

Food and Agriculture Organization (1995). World declaration on nutrition: The International Conference on Nutrition. *Food, Nutrition, and Agriculture, 13,* 2-3.

Food and Agriculture Organization (1996). Rome declaration on world food security and World Food Summit plan of action. Rome, Italy: FAO, United Nations.

Fraker, T. (1990). *The effects of food stamps on food consumption*. Alexandria, VA: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.

Frongillo, E. A. (1999). Validation of measures of food insecurity and hunger. *Journal of Nutrition, 129*, 506S-509S.

Gunderson, C., & Gruber, J. (forthcoming). The dynamic determinants of food insufficiency. Papers and Proceedings of the Second Food Security Measurement and Research Conference. Washington, DC: USDA.

Gunderson, C., LeBlanc, M., & Kuhn, B. (1999). The changing food assistance landscape: The Food Stamp Program in a post-welfare reform environment. Washington, DC: USDA, Economic Research Service.

Gunderson, C., & Oliveira, V. (paper under review). The Food Stamp Program and food insufficiency. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*.

Hamelin, A.M., Habicht, J. P., & Beaudry, M. (1999). Food insecurity: Consequences for the household and broader implications. *Journal of Nutrition*, 129, 525S-528S.

Hamilton, W. L., Cook, J. T., Thompson, W. W., Buron, L. F., Frongillo, E. A., Olson, C. M., & Wehler, C. A. (1997). *Household food security in the United States in 1995*. Washington, DC: USDA.

Johnson, F. C., Hotchkiss, D. R., Mosck, N. B., McCandless, P., & Karolak, M. (1999). The impact of the AFDC and Food Stamp programs on child nutrition. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved, 10*, 298-312.

Kalil, A., Corcoran, M. E., Danziger, S. K., Tolman, R., Seefeldt, K. S., Rosen, D., & Nam, Y. (1998). Getting jobs, keeping jobs, and earning a living wage: Can welfare reform work? Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan, Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy.

Kendall, A., Olson, C. M., & Frongillo, E. A. (1995). Validation of the Radimer/Cornell measures of hunger and food insecurity. *Journal of Nutrition, 125*, 2793-2801.

Kendall, A., Olson, C. M., & Frongillo, E. A. (1996). Relationship of hunger and food insecurity to food availability and consumption. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 96*, 1010-1024.

Loprest, P. (1999). Families who left welfare: Who are they and how are they doing? *Assessing the New Federalism Discussion Paper*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Margetts, B. M., & Jackson, A. A. (1993). Interactions between people's diets and their smoking habits: The dietary and nutritional survey of British adults. *British Medical Journal, 307*, 1381-1384.

Moss, N. E., & Carver, K. (1998). The effect of WIC and Medicaid on infant mortality in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 88*, 1354-1362.

Murphy, J. M., Wehler, C. A., Pagano, M. E., Little, M., Kleinman, R. E., & Jellinek, M. S. (1998). Relationship between hunger and psychosocial functioning in low-income American children. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 37*, 163-170.

Najman, J. M. (1993). Health and poverty: Past, present, and prospects for the future. *Social Science and Medicine, 36*, 157-166.

Nelson, K., Brown, M. E., & Lurie, M. (1998). Hunger in an adult patient population. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 279* (15), 1211-1214.

Nord, M., & Bickel, G. (1999). Estimating the prevalence of children's hunger from Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement. Paper presented at the Second Food Security Measurement and Research Conference, Alexandria, VA, February 1999.

Nord, M., Jemison, K., & Bickel, G. (1999). Prevalence of food insecurity and hunger, by state, 1996-1998. *Food Assistance & Nutrition Research Report No. 2.* Washington, DC: USDA

Olson, C. M. (1999). Nutrition and health outcomes associated with food insecurity and hunger. *Journal of Nutrition, 129,* 521S-524S.

Owen, A. L., & Owen, G. M. (1997). Twenty years of WIC: A review of some effects of the program. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 97*, 772-782.

Quint, J., Edin, K., Buck, L. M., Fink, B., Padilla, C. Y., Simmons-Hewitt, O., & Valmont, E. M. (1999). *Big cities and welfare reform: Early implementation and ethnographic findings from the Project on Devolution and Urban Change.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Rose, D. (1999). Economic determinants and dietary consequences of food insecurity in the United States. *Journal of Nutrition, 129*, 517S-520S.

Rose, D. C., Gunderson, C., & Oliveira, V. (1998). Socio-economic determinants of food insecurity in the United States: Evidence from the SIPP and CSFII datasets. *ERS Technical Bulletin No. 1869.* Washington, DC: USDA.

Rose, D., Habicht, J. P., & Devaney, B. (1998). Household participation in the Food Stamp and WIC programs increases the nutrient intakes of preschool children. *Journal of Nutrition, 128,* 548-555.

Rose, D., & Oliveira, V. (1997). Nutrient intakes of individuals from food-insufficient households in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 87*, 1956-1961.

Scott, R. I., & Wehler, C. A. (1998). Food insecurity/food insufficiency: An empirical examination of alternative measures of food problems in impoverished U.S. households. Madison, WI: Institute for Research on Poverty.

Second Harvest (1997). *Hunger, 1997: The faces and facts*. Chicago: Second Harvest.

South Carolina Department of Social Services (1998a). *Comparison between working and nonworking clients whose cases were closed between January and March, 1997.* Columbia, SC: March 1998.

South Carolina Department of Social Services (1998b). *Survey of former Family Independence Program clients: Cases closed during April through June, 1997.* Columbia, SC: June 1998.

Starkey, L. J., Gray-Donald, K., & Kuhnlein, H. V. (1999). Nutrient intake of food bank users is related to frequency of food bank use, household size, smoking, education and country of birth. *Journal of Nutrition, 129,* 883-889.

Tarasuk, V. S., & Beaton, G. H. (1999a). Household food insecurity and hunger among families using food banks. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 90,* 109-113.

Tarasuk, V. S., & Beaton, G. H. (1999b). Women's dietary intakes in the context of household food insecurity. *Journal of Nutrition, 129,* 672-679.

United States Conference of Mayors (1997). *Implementing welfare reform in America's cities: A 34-city survey.* Washington, DC: USCM.

United States Conference of Mayors (1998). *A status report on hunger and homelessness in American cities — 1998.* Washington, DC: USCM.

United States Department of Agriculture (1999). Who is leaving the Food Stamp Program? An analysis of caseload changes from 1994 to 1997. Washington, DC: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.

United States Department of Health and Human Services (1999). Change in TANF caseloads. Washington, DC: DHHS, Administration for Children and Families.

Urban Institute (1999). National survey of America's family: Snapshots. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Wehler, C. A., Scott, R. I., Anderson, J. J., Summer, L., & Parker, L. (1995). *Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project: A survey of childhood hunger in the United States.* Washington, DC: Food Research and Action Center.

Zedlewski, S. R. (1999). Work activity and obstacles to work among TANF recipients. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Zedlewski, S. R., & Brauner, S. (1999). Declines in food stamp and welfare participation: Is there a connection? Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Recent Publications on MDRC Projects

Note: For works not published by MDRC, the publisher's name is shown in parentheses. A complete publications list is available from MDRC and on its Web site (www.mdrc.org), which also contains copies of MDRC's publications.

Reforming Welfare and Making Work Pay

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

A multi-year study in four major urban counties — Cuyahoga County, Ohio (which includes the city of Cleveland), Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, and Philadelphia — that examines how welfare reforms are being implemented and affect poor people, their neighborhoods, and the institutions that serve them.

Big Cities and Welfare Reform: Early Implementation and Ethnographic Findings from the Project on Devolution and Urban Change. 1999. Janet Quint, Kathryn Edin, Maria Buck, Barbara Fink, Yolanda Padilla, Olis Simmons-Hewitt, Mary Valmont.

ReWORKing Welfare: Technical Assistance for States and Localities

A multifaceted effort to assist states and localities in designing and implementing their welfare reform programs. The project includes a series of "how-to" guides, conferences, briefings, and customized, in-depth technical assistance.

After AFDC: Welfare-to-Work Choices and Challenges for States. 1997. Dan Bloom.

Changing to a Work First Strategy: Lessons from Los Angeles County's GAIN Program for Welfare Recipients. 1997. Evan Weissman.

Work First: How to Implement an Employment-Focused Approach to Welfare Reform. 1997. Amy Brown.

Business Partnerships: How to Involve Employers in Welfare Reform. 1998. Amy Brown, Maria Buck, Erik Skinner.

Learnfare: How to Implement a Mandatory Stay-in-School Program for Teenage Parents on Welfare. 1998. David Long, Johannes Bos.

Promoting Participation: How to Increase Involvement in Welfare-to-Work Activities. 1999. Gayle Hamilton, Susan Scrivener.

Encouraging Work, Reducing Poverty: The Impact of Work Incentive Programs. 2000. Gordon Berlin.

Time Limits

Cross-State Study of Time-Limited Welfare

An examination of the implementation of some of the first state-initiated time-limited welfare programs.

Implementing Time-Limited Welfare: Early Experiences in Three States. 1995. Dan Bloom, David Butler.

The View from the Field: As Time Limits Approach, Welfare Recipients and Staff Talk About Their Attitudes and Expectations. 1997. Amy Brown, Dan Bloom, David Butler.

Welfare Time Limits: An Interim Report Card. 1999. Dan Bloom.

Connecticut's Jobs First Program

An evaluation of Connecticut's statewide time-limited welfare program, which includes financial work incentives and requirements to participate in employment-related services aimed at rapid job placement. This study provides some of the earliest information on the effects of time limits in major urban areas.

Early Data on the Implementation of Connecticut's Jobs First Program. 1997. Dan Bloom, Mary Andes.

Jobs First: Early Implementation of Connecticut's Welfare Reform Initiative. 1998. Dan Bloom, Mary Andes, Claudia Nicholson.

Connecticut Post-Time Limit Tracking Study: Three-Month Survey Results. 1998. Jo Anna Hunter-Manns, Dan Bloom, Richard Hendra, Johanna Walter.

Connecticut Post-Time Limit Tracking Study: Six-Month Survey Results. 1999. Jo Anna Hunter-Manns, Dan Bloom.

Jobs First: Implementation and Early Impacts of Connecticut's Welfare Reform Initiative. 2000. Dan Bloom, Laura Melton, Charles Michalopoulos, Susan Scrivener, Johanna Walter.

Florida's Family Transition Program

An evaluation of Florida's initial time-limited welfare program, which includes services, requirements, and financial work incentives intended to reduce long-term welfare receipt and help welfare recipients find and keep jobs.

The Family Transition Program: An Early Implementation Report on Flo: ida's Time-Limited Welfare Initiative. 1995. Dan Bloom.

The Family Transition Program: Implementation and Early Impacts of Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 1997. Dan Bloom, James Kemple, Robin Rogers-Dillon.

The Family Transition Program: Implementation and Interim Impacts of Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 1998. Dan Bloom, Mary Farrell, James Kemple, Nandita Verma.

The Family Transition Program: Implementation and Three-Year Impacts of Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 1999. Dan Bloom, Mary Farrell, James Kemple, Nandita Verma.

Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project

An evaluation of Vermont's statewide welfare reform program, which includes a work requirement after a certain period of welfare receipt, and financial work incentives.

WRP: Implementation and Early Impacts of Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project. 1998. Dan Bloom, Charles Michalopoulos, Johanna Walter, Patricia Auspos.

Forty-Two Month Impacts of Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project. 1999. Richard Hendra, Charles Michalopoulos.

Financial Incentives

Encouraging Work, Reducing Poverty: The Impact of Work Incentive Programs. 2000. Gordon Berlin.

Minnesota Family Investment Program

An evaluation of Minnesota's welfare reform initiative, which aims to encourage work, alleviate poverty, and reduce welfare dependence.

MFIP: An Early Report on Minnesota's Approach to Welfare Reform. 1995. Virginia Knox, Amy Brown, Winston Lin.

Making Welfare Work and Work Pay: Implementation and 18-Month Impacts of the Minnesota Family Investment Program. 1997. Cynthia Miller, Virginia Knox, Patricia Auspos, Jo Anna Hunter-Manns, Alan Orenstein.

New Hope Project

A test of a community-based, work-focused antipoverty program and welfare alternative operating in Milwaukee.

The New Hope Offer: Participants in the New Hope Demonstration Discuss Work, Family, and Self-Sufficiency. 1996. Dudley Benoit.

Creating New Hope: Implementation of a Program to Reduce Poverty and Reform Welfare. 1997. Thomas Brock, Fred Doolittle, Veronica Fellerath, Michael Wiseman.

Who Got New Hope? 1997. Michael Wiseman.

An Early Look at Community Service Jobs in the New Hope Demonstration. 1998. Susan Poglinco, Julian Brash, Robert Granger.

New Hope for People with Low Incomes: Two-Year Results of a Program to Reduce Poverty and Reform Welfare. 1999. Johannes Bos, Aletha Huston, Robert Granger, Greg Duncan, Thomas Brock, Vonnie McLoyd.

Canada's Self-Sufficiency Project

A test of the effectiveness of a temporary earnings supplement on the employment and welfare receipt of public assistance recipients. Reports on the Self-Sufficiency Project are available from: Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), 275 Slater St., Suite 900, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9, Canada. Tel.: 613-237-4311; Fax: 613-237-5045. In the United States, the reports are also available from MDRC.

Creating an Alternative to Welfare: First-Year Findings on the Implementation, Welfare Impacts, and Costs of the Self-Sufficiency Project (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation [SRDC]). 1995. Tod Mijanovich, David Long.

The Struggle for Self-Sufficiency: Participants in the Self-Sufficiency Project Talk About Work, Welfare, and Their Futures (SRDC). 1995. Wendy Bancroft, Sheila Currie Vernon.

Do Financial Incentives Encourage Welfare Recipients to Work? Initial 18-Month Findings from the Self-Sufficiency Project (SRDC). 1996. David Card, Philip Robins.

When Work Pays Better Than Welfare: A Summary of the Self-Sufficiency Project's Implementation, Focus Group, and Initial 18-Month Impact Reports (SRDC). 1996.

How Important Are "Entry Effects" in Financial Incentive Programs for Welfare Recipients? Experimental Evidence from the Self-Sufficiency Project (SRDC). 1997. David Card, Philip Robins, Winston Lin.

Do Work Incentives Have Unintended Consequences? Measuring "Entry Effects" in the Self-Sufficiency Project (SRDC). 1998. Gordon Berlin, Wendy Bancroft, David Card, Winston Lin, Philip Robins.

When Financial Incentives Encourage Work: Complete 18-Month Findings from the Self-Sufficiency Project. 1998. Winston Lin, Philip Robins, David Card, Kristen Harknett, Susanna Lui-Gurr.

Does SSP Plus Increase Employment? The Effect of Adding Services to the Self-Sufficiency Project's Financial Incentives. 1999. Gail Quets, Philip Robins, Elsie Pan, Charles Michalopoulos, David Card.

When Financial Work Incentives Pay for Themselves: Early Findings from the Self-Sufficiency Project's Applicant Study. 1999. Charles Michalopoulos, Philip Robins, David Card.

Mandatory Welfare Employment Programs

National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies

Conceived and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with support from the U.S. Department of Education, this is the largest-scale evaluation ever conducted of different strategies for moving people from welfare to employment.

Adult Education for People on AFDC: A Synthesis of Research (U.S. Department of Education [ED]/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]). 1995. Edward Pauly.

Early Findings on Program Impacts in Three Sites (HHS/ED). 1995. Stephen Freedman, Daniel Friedlander.

Five Years After: The Long-Term Effects of Welfare-to-Work Programs (Russell Sage Foundation). 1995. Daniel Friedlander, Gary Burtless.

Monthly Participation Rates in Three Sites and Factors Affecting Participation Levels in Welfare-to-Work Programs (HHS/ED). 1995. Gayle Hamilton.

Changing to a Work First Strategy: Lessons from Los Angeles County's GAIN Program for Welfare Recipients. 1997. Evan Weissman.

Evaluating Two Welfare-to-Work Program Approaches: Two-Year Findings on the Labor Force Attachment and Human Capital Development Programs in Three Sites (HHS/ED). 1997. Gayle Hamilton, Thomas Brock, Mary Farrell, Daniel Friedlander, Kristen Harknett.

Work First: How to Implement an Employment-Focused Approach to Welfare Reform. 1997. Amy Brown.

Implementation, Participation Patterns, Costs, and Two-Year Impacts of the Portland (Oregon) Welfare-to-Work Program (HHS/ED). 1998. Susan Scrivener, Gayle Hamilton, Mary Farrell, Stephen Freedman, Daniel Friedlander, Marisa Mitchell, Jodi Nudelman, Christine Schwartz.

Los Angeles's Jobs-First GAIN Program

An evaluation of Los Angeles's refocused GAIN (welfare-to-work) program, which emphasizes rapid employment. This is the first in-depth study of a full-scale "work first" program in one of the nation's largest urban areas.

Changing to a Work First Strategy: Lessons from Los Angeles County's GAIN Program for Welfare Recipients. 1997. Evan Weissman.

The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: Preliminary Findings on Participation Patterns and First-Year Impacts. 1998. Stephen Freedman, Marisa Mitchell, David Navarro.

The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: First-Year Findings on Participation Patterns and Impacts. 1999. Stephen Freedman, Marisa Mitchell, David Navarro.

Teen Parents on Welfare

Teenage Parent Programs: A Synthesis of the Long-Term Effects of the New Chance Demonstration, Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program, and the Teenage Parent Demonstration (TPD). 1998. Robert Granger, Rachel Cytron.

Ohio's LEAP Program

An evaluation of Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program, which uses financial incentives to encourage teenage parents on welfare to stay in or return to school.

LEAP: Final Report on Ohio's Welfare Initiative to Improve School Attendance Among Teenage Parents. 1997. Johannes Bos, Veronica Fellerath.

New Chance Demonstration

A test of a comprehensive program of services that seeks to improve the economic status and general well-being of a group of highly disadvantaged young women and their children.

New Chance: Final Report on a Comprehensive Program for Young Mothers in Poverty and Their Children. 1997. Janet Quint, Johannes Bos, Denise Polit.

Parenting Behavior in a Sample of Young Mothers in Poverty: Results of the New Chance Observational Study. 1998. Martha Zaslow, Carolyn Eldred, editors.

Focusing on Fathers

Parents' Fair Share Demonstration

A demonstration for unemployed noncustodial parents (usually fathers) of children on welfare. PFS aims to improve the men's employment and earnings, reduce child poverty by increasing child support payments, and assist the fathers in playing a broader constructive role in their children's lives.

Low-Income Parents and the Parents' Fair Share Demonstration. 1996. Earl Johnson, Fred Doolittle.

Working with Low-Income Cases: Lessons for the Child Support Enforcement System from Parents' Fair Share. 1998. Fred Doolittle, Suzanne Lynn.

Building Opportunities, Enforcing Obligations: Implementation and Interim Impacts of Parents' Fair Share. 1998. Fred Doolittle, Virginia Knox, Cynthia Miller, Sharon Rowser.

Fathers' Fair Share: Helping Poor Men Manage Child Support and Fatherhood (Russell Sage Foundation). 1999. Earl Johnson, Ann Levine, Fred Doolittle.

Other

Can They All Work? A Study of the Employment Potential of Welfare Recipients in a Welfare-to-Work Program. 1995. James Riccio, Stephen Freedman.

Florida's Project Inaependence: Benefits, Costs, and Two-Year Impacts of Florida's JOBS Program. 1995. James Kemple, Daniel Friedlander, Veronica Fellerath.

From Welfare to Work Among Lone Parents in Britain: Lessons for America. 1996. James Riccio.

Employment and Community Initiatives

Connections to Work Project

A study of local efforts to increase competition in the choice of providers of employment services for welfare recipients and other low-income populations. The project also provides assistance to cutting-edge local initiatives aimed at helping such people access and secure jobs.

Tulsa's IndEx Program: A Business-Led Initiative for Welfare Reform and Economic Development. 1997. Maria Buck.

Washington Works: Sustaining a Vision of Welfare Reform Based on Personal Change, Work Preparation, and Employer Involvement. 1998. Susan Gooden.

Cost Analysis Step by Step: A How-to Guide for Planners and Providers of Welfare-to-Work and Other Employment and Training Programs. 1998. David Greenberg, Ute Appenzeller.

Designing and Administering a Wage-Paying Community Service Employment Program Under TANF: Some Considerations and Choices. 1999. Kay Sherwood.

San Francisco Works: Toward an Employer-Led Approach to Welfare Reform and Workforce Development. 2000. Steven Bliss.

Jobs-Plus Initiative

A multi-site effort to greatly increase employment among public housing residents.

A Research Framework for Evaluating Jobs-Plus, a Saturation and Place-Based Employment Initiative for Public Housing Residents. 1998. James Riccio.

Mobilizing Public Housing Communities for Work: Origins and Early Accomplishments of the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. James Riccio.

Building a Convincing Test of a Public Housing Employment Program Using Non-Experimental Methods: Planning for the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Section 3 Public Housing Study

An examination of the effectiveness of Section 3 of the 1968 Housing and Urban Development Act in affording employment opportunities for public housing residents.

Lessons from the Field on the Implementation of Section 3 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). 1996. Maxine Bailey, Suzanne Lynn.

Canada's Earnings Supplement Project

A test of an innovative financial incentive intended to expedite the reemployment of displaced workers and encourage full-year work by seasonal or part-year workers, thereby also reducing receipt of Unemployment Insurance.

Implementing the Earnings Supplement Project: A Test of a Re-employment Incentive (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation). 1997. Howard Bloom, Barbara Fink, Susanna Lui-Gurr, Wendy Bancroft, Doug Tattrie.

Testing a Re-employment Incentive for Displaced Workers: The Earnings Supplement Project. 1999. Howard Bloom, Saul Schwartz, Susanna Lui-Gurr, Suk-Won Lee.

Education Reform

Career Academies

The largest and most comprehensive evaluation of a school-to-work initiative, this nine-site study examines a promising approach to high school restructuring and the school-to-work transition.

Career Academies: Early Implementation Lessons from a 10-Site Evaluation. 1996. James Kemple, JoAnn Leah Rock.

Career Academies: Communities of Support for Students and Teachers — Emerging Findings from a 10-Site Evaluation. 1997. James Kemple.

Career Academies: Building Career Awareness and Work-Based Learning Activities Through Employer Partnerships. 1999. James Kemple, Susan Poglinco, Jason Snipes.

Career Academies: Impacts on Students' Engagement and Performance in High School. 2000. James Kemple, Jason Snipes.

School-to-Work Project

A study of innovative programs that help students make the transition from school to work or careers.

Home-Grown Lessons: Innovative Programs Linking School and Work (Jossey-Bass Publishers). 1995. Edward Pauly, Hilary Kopp, Joshua Haimson.

Home-Grown Progress: The Evolution of Innovative School-to-Work Programs. 1997. Rachel Pedraza, Edward Pauly, Hilary Kopp.

Project Transition

A demonstration program that tested a combination of school-based strategies to facilitate students' transition from middle school to high school.

Project Transition: Testing an Intervention to Help High School Freshmen Succeed. 1999. Janet Quint, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Pastor, Rachel Cytron.

Equity 2000

Equity 2000 is a nationwide initiative sponsored by the College Board to improve low-income students' access to college. The MDRC paper examines the implementation of Equity 2000 in Milwaukee Public Schools.

Getting to the Right Algebra: The Equity 2000 Initiative in Milwaukee Public Schools. 1999. Sandra Ham, Erica Walker.

MDRC Working Papers on Research Methodology

A new series of papers that explore alternative methods of examining the implementation and impacts of programs and policies.

Building a Convincing Test of a Public Housing Employment Program Using Non-Experimental Methods: Planning for the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Estimating Program Impacts on Student Achievement Using "Short" Interrupted Time Series. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Using Cluster Random Assignment to Measure Program Impacts: Statistical Implications for the Evaluation of Education Programs. 1999. Howard Bloom, Johannes Bos, Suk-Won Lee.

About MDRC

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social policy research organization. We are dedicated to learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. Through our research and the active communication of our findings, we seek to enhance the effectiveness of social policies and programs. MDRC was founded in 1974 and is located in New York City and San Francisco.

MDRC's current projects focus on welfare and economic security, education, and employment and community initiatives. Complementing our evaluations of a wide range of welfare reforms are new studies of supports for the working poor and emerging analyses of how programs affect children's development and their families' well-being. In the field of education, we are testing reforms aimed at improving the performance of public schools, especially in urban areas. Finally, our community projects are using innovative approaches to increase employment in low-income neighborhoods.

Our projects are a mix of demonstrations – field tests of promising program models – and evaluations of government and community initiatives, and we employ a wide range of methods such as large-scale studies to determine a program's effects, surveys, case studies, and ethnographies of individuals and families. We share the findings and lessons from our work – including best practices for program operators – with a broad audience within the policy and practitioner community, as well as the general public and the media.

Over the past quarter century, MDRC has worked in almost every state, all of the nation's largest cities, and Canada. We conduct our projects in partnership with state and local governments, the federal government, public school systems, community organizations, and numerous private philanthropies.

MDRC

16 East 34 Street
New York, New York 10016
(212) 532-3200

www.mdrc.org

88 Kearny Street, Suite 1800
San Francisco, California 94108
(415) 781-3800